



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Brevard County Health Department Honored for Excellence in Public Health**

***Local Health Department Program is One of 39 Nationwide to Receive  
"Model Practice Award" in 2012***

**Heidar Heshmati, M.D., M.P.H., director of Brevard County Health Department** was honored at the 2012 annual conference of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), a body of peers, for developing and implementing a program that demonstrates exemplary and replicable qualities in response to a local public health need. ***The Sexual Assault Examination Response Program*** was one of 39 public health programs developed by a local health department selected from across the nation to receive NACCHO's Model Practice Award.

The Sexual Assault Examination Response Program was implemented in partnership with the State's Attorney Office, Sexual Assault Victim Services, Salvation Army and Serene Harbour Domestic Violence Shelters, law enforcement agencies, and the Brevard County Health Department. This program responds to sexual violence victims quickly and compassionately 24 hours a day with comprehensive individualized, victim centered care in a safe location. This program helps reduce a tremendous burden on the emergency medical system in both capacity and cost.

"We are proud to receive NACCHO's Model Practice Award for Sexual Assault Examination Response Program. The award is evidence of our commitment to developing responsive and innovative public health programs that improve the health of local residents," said Heidar Heshmati, M.D., M.P.H., director of Brevard County Health Department. **The Brevard County Health Department is the only health department nationwide to receive a total of eleven model practice awards from NACCHO.**

Each innovative project receiving the award was peer-reviewed (by other local health department professionals) and selected from a group of 166 applications. Since 2003, NACCHO's Model Practice Awards program has honored initiatives—including programs, resources, and tools—that demonstrate how local health departments and their community partners can effectively collaborate to address local public health concerns. The Brevard County Health Department, Model Practice Program, **"Sexual Assault Examination Response"** is now part of an online, searchable database of successful public health practices in areas ranging from immunization and maternal and child health to infectious diseases and emergency

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preparedness. The NACCHO Model Practice database allows users to benefit from colleagues' experiences, to learn what works, and to ensure that resources are used wisely on effective programs that have been implemented with good results. It also enables NACCHO to share information with key stakeholders and media about the good work being done by local health departments across the country.

This award puts Brevard County Health Department into special company—a select group of health departments that exemplify a forward thinking, proactive attitude toward protecting and promoting the health of communities across the nation.

For more information about the NACCHO Model Practice Awards and to view a list of other award winners, go to [www.naccho.org](http://www.naccho.org).

**About the National Association of County and City Health Officials**

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's 2,800 local governmental health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities.

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